

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 3, 8-10, 17-18, 20-23 and 26-27, which are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 3, 8-10, and 17-18, 20-23 and 26-27 stand rejected. Claims 4 and 5 stand withdrawn. Claims 17, 21 and 27 are amended in this response while claims 4, 5, 24 and 25 are cancelled in this response.

The undersigned thanks Examiner Pellegrino for the telephonic interview of August 24, 2010, wherein the rejection of claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph, objection to claim 27 and rejoinder of claims 4, 5 were discussed. The Examiner agreed that the amendments sufficiently address the claims objections and rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph. However, regarding the rejoinder of claims 4, 5, the Examiner indicated that it would need further study of the application and may raise issues that might need further consideration. In order to expedite prosecution, applicant has canceled claims 4, 5. However, applicant reserves the right to further pursue these claims in a divisional application.

In view of the following discussion, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

I. Objection to claim 27

Claim 27 is objected to for minor informalities. Withdrawal of this objection is requested in view of the aforementioned amendments to this claim addressing the informalities.

II. Rejection of claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §112:

Claims 21-24 are objected to under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of cancellation of claim 24, amendments to claim 21 and the following remarks.

The inferior base component 34 as shown in Fig. 3 of applicant's drawings has a top side

plate portion 36 and three sides of raised wall 38 along three outer edges. (*See*, paragraph [0028] of U.S. 20040172021 which is a publication of the subject application). Further, as seen from Fig. 5 of applicant's drawings, the inferior base component (34) has a slot (40) running along the inside surface of the raised wall (38). Thus, claim 21 has been amended to recite that the raised wall comprises the slot recited in claim 17 while claim 24 is canceled. Hence, this rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claims 3, 8, 9, 17, 18, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

At pages 4-5 of the subject Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 3, 8, 9, and 17-18, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mazda (WO 94/04100) in view of Alfaro et al. (US 200132017), Michelson (U.S. 6120503) and Keller et al. (EP 1344508). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested in view of the aforementioned amendment to claim 17 to incorporate subject matter of allowable claim 25.

Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn with respect to independent claim 17 and all claims depending therefrom.

IV. Rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

At pages 5-6 of the subject Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mazda in view of Alfaro et al., Michelson Keller and further in view of Khandkar et al. (U.S. 2004032017). Claim 10 depends from independent claim 17 which has been amended to incorporate subject matter of allowable claim 25. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn with respect to claim 10.

V. Rejection of Claims 22-24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

At page 7 of the subject Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 22-24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mazda in view of Alfaro et al., Michelson, Keller and

further in view of Errico et al. (U.S. 6989032). Claim 24 is canceled and claim 17 is amended to include subject matter of allowable claim 25. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn with respect to claims 22-23 depending from claim 17.

VI. Rejection of Claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a):

At page 7 of the subject Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mazda in view of Alfaro et al. and Michelson and further in view of Buettner-Janz et al. (U.S. 4759766). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested as claim 26 depends from independent claim 17 which has been amended to incorporate subject matter of allowable claim 25.

Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the instant claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited. In the event there are any fees due and owing in connection with this matter, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 11-0223.

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Respectfully submitted,

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